

Of course, at 12 noon on Wednesday, January 3, the 107th Congress will convene with an immediate live quorum, to be followed by the swearing-in ceremonies for the newly elected Senators.

I want to emphasize that. That is on January 3. It is at 12 noon. There will be a live quorum, and all Senators are required by law, if they want to be sworn in and receive pay, to be here for that occasion.

On Saturday, January 6, the Senate will proceed as a body to the Hall of the House of Representatives for the official counting of the electoral college votes.

The Senate has passed a resolution that would move that to January 5, which would be a Friday, instead of Saturday, January 6. The House has not yet passed that resolution. But they have indicated that they may pass a resolution changing the date to Friday, January 5, for the counting of the electoral college votes. We will let all of our colleagues know exactly about that.

I believe we are required to proceed at 1 p.m. on either Friday, January 5, or, as it now stands, January 6. We will make that clear later on. Senators will be notified if there is a date change, if and when it is confirmed.

Of course, Inauguration of the 43rd President of the United States will occur at 12 noon on Saturday, January 20.

Furthermore, because a Senate committee is a continuing body, committees may begin working on committee nominations on January 5 or 6. Senator DASCHLE and I will be working on that. But there is the possibility, between January 3 and the Inauguration, that there could be some committee hearings on nominations. We will have to work through that. Of course, it will depend on the receipt of those nominations once the investigations have been completed. We will work through what committees and how that will be handled. Members who might be involved will be notified as early as possible, and hopefully that will be even before the end of the year.

Votes on confirmations may take place even on Saturday, January 20. I believe that has been the case in the past—if not January 20, certainly beginning on Monday, January 22. We will want to move forward very quickly on actually confirming the nominations. Senators will be further notified on January 3.

Regarding the Cabinet nominations schedule, when we receive those nominations, again we will work together on what that schedule may be.

Again, I want to thank the Senate officers, Senators, and leadership on both sides of the aisle for what I believe has been a very productive session and for the dedication of Senators to the American people.

I see Senator DASCHLE is here. We have some resolutions we can do if we

have a break here in a moment. Then we will have some that we want to do at the very end of the session.

At this point, I yield the floor if Senator LAUTENBERG wishes to make any comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader and the Chair for recognition.

SERVING IN THE SENATE

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I want to be sure before I go into my remarks that neither of the leaders, the majority leader or the Democratic leader, is waiting for some floor time for some special things they want to go ahead with because I hope not to cover every day of the 18 years I have served here.

But I do want to make some remarks about this moment in time—a moment that I have kind of looked at with some amount of trepidation because this is the end for me, at the bottom of the ninth inning, and we have a couple of things to do before it is pretty much all over.

I am probably speaking now for the last time in the U.S. Senate. After 18 years as a Member of this institution, some time ago I made a reluctant decision to step down—not to try again after three terms. And, to be perfectly honest, there are those moments when I look at that decision not to run for a fourth term with considerable regret. This has been an incredible experience—an experience that so few ever get to have and such a worthwhile thing to do.

While my friends, the Democratic leader and the Democratic whip, are on the floor, I want to express to each one of them how deep my appreciation is for the cooperation and the ability to work together on issues of concern—not just for my State but for the country at large—and how helpful Senator DASCHLE, our leader, has been; and my good friend HARRY REID from Nevada, the only State that really competes with New Jersey in the hospitality of the gaming industry. I hope we will continue to do more business than Nevada.

In all seriousness, these are States that have a certain kinship that is not always easy to recognize because our coast is far larger than their coast, and sometimes we differ on issues but never on intent.

This is a job that has been the highlight of my life, next to my family—my children, my grandchildren, eight of them; the oldest is seven. I want to make sure they understood what their grandfather did when he was spending time in Washington. They are too young to really know what the job is about. But they know who the President of the United States is. Some of

them knew because the oldest one is seven. There are eight of them, obviously, and one is just 2 months old. The little one could not understand what I have done. I was lucky and brought all of them down for Father's Day. I was able to take them to the White House and take some pictures with the President. They will look at these pictures one day and say, OK, that is where our grandfather spent his time when we didn't see much of him. I hope they will feel the same kind of pride and love for country as I do.

This job, one of some 1,850 people who ever served in the Senate, is such an honor to have. It is such an exciting place to be. I look at my desk now as a reminder of why I had this desk moved as my seniority improved from the far corner next to where it is now. I brought it with me wherever I went. It was a fairly easy task. I don't want the citizens to think I had people put to work for little reason; just a couple of screws lift out of the floor and we move it over here.

When I think of my parents and what this country meant to my grandparents when they brought my parents as little children to these shores, I open the desk. As everyone here knows but the public probably doesn't, there is something one could call "graffiti" in these desks—a signature, a carving, a writing in indelible ink that gives a name and the State that the individual represented. I never got discouraged about this job, but anytime I needed a little stimulation about how important the work we were doing was outside of the legislative routine, I looked in this desk and I seen "Truman, Missouri." Harry Truman sat at this desk when he served in the Senate. It is such an honor for me to be able to fill the seat, not the shoes, as they say.

Every day I came to work here was a privilege, even when the day didn't turn out as one expected. The people of New Jersey sent me here to accomplish things that affected their lives and their families, and it is not easy to relinquish those duties. I hope they will believe that FRANK LAUTENBERG served them honestly and diligently. I will leave it to them to mark the report card to see how we did.

My service was a way for me to give something back. I had a successful business career, and I spent 30 years doing that, but there was something more that was needed as far as my life was concerned. I am so grateful my grandparents, in their wisdom in the earliest part of the last century, decided to pack up bag and baggage—they didn't have much baggage, I can tell you that; all they had was the spirit and desire to live free—and come to this country, my mother a year old from Russia, and my father 6 years old from Poland. They believed so much in America. They were so sensitive about things. For my grandparents, whose

native tongues were reflective of the country they came from, anything but English was almost prohibited in the house. They wanted to talk English. They wanted to speak the language that their friends and their neighbors believed should be used as Americans. Now we understand people can live in multiple cultures and continue to treasure the language that they or their parents had before they came to America. In those days, any indication they could get that they were truly Americans meant so much.

So they came and worked hard, with no education. My father went to the sixth grade only; he had to help his parents. But they never dreamed their children would have the opportunities that were so robust and so fulfilling.

I spent 30 years in the computer business, running a company called ADP, Automatic Data Processing. The company started with two boyhood friends of mine. We started without any money of our own, without any outside financing. The company today has 33,000 people and is one of America's best performing companies in terms of its products and the stock market's response.

I got there because this government was there to render service to our people. The one thing that bothers me when we get into political campaigns and speeches are made on the stump and people talk about the government and how small it ought to be and why it is too big and the loaded bureaucracies, I can't stand it. Honest to goodness, I work with the people who populate this place day in and day out—not the Senators exclusively but those who work here on both sides, Democrat and Republican. I see how diligent they are in trying to get their day's work done and how committed they are in the service of the people. I respect them. Of course, those whom I have gotten to know in my office, I love them as well. One develops a respect and almost a reverence for people who will come in and go to work at 8 o'clock or 9 o'clock in the morning and stay; if we stay until 2 o'clock in the morning, they stay until 2 o'clock in the morning. For many years, until very recently, there was never any compensation for overtime; that was considered part of the job. For those in the management of the office, and the leadership position among the staff, there is still nothing like overtime. They do it because they feel the responsibility. It has made an enormous difference in the way we conduct ourselves.

Mr. President, the bottom line view that I bring is one that has developed as a result of the opportunities that were afforded me. I know I probably have said it too many times, but I ask my colleagues to indulge me once again when I talk about my family.

My father died a very young man, at age 43. I had enlisted in the Army and was given the benefit of the GI bill.

The GI bill made the difference in my life, enabling me to use the knowledge and programs I studied and learned to start a business that became an industry. It is the computing industry, as contrasted to the computer industry, the hardware industry. To me it was a great example of the way government can empower individuals and families to improve their lives.

It is a lesson I will never forget. The education I got through the GI bill set the foundation for me to build that business. When I look at what happened with ADP and the number of people it has put together, 33,000 employees, processing paychecks for 33 million people across our country and others.

When I was finishing my 30th year in business, I thought there were other things I ought to try to do to help pay back what I thought was a unique opportunity. I wanted to make sure that it continued to exist for others, as well. I came to the Senate. I ran in 1982 and was elected then. I brought what was a fairly unique perspective because there weren't, at that time, as there are now, so many businesspeople who came from not having had an elective office experience but came in fresh from the business to the Senate.

When I got here, my goals were to try again to permit people to think independently, to make sure that the rights and the freedoms we enjoyed would be protected, to make sure there would be an opportunity for those who could learn without having, necessarily, the financing to do it. That is what the GI bill taught me. It has been my hope that people would understand that these opportunities must continue to exist. That is why we have these discussions about investing in education, making sure children have the appropriate nutrition, and that people can count on getting their health protected when they have a problem, or at least making certain as they grow and mature that they know they don't have to worry about an illness wiping out not only their assets but also demolishing their health.

Just so everybody knows, I am going to take some time here. Therefore, it may take a little time for me to do the whole story. I see the majority leader either looking at me so anxious to hear the whole story that he wanted to ask me what it was.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if the distinguished Senator from New Jersey would yield, perhaps that is a good point. Yes, I would like to hear the story uninterrupted. If the Senator would allow us to do a little bit of leadership business—one of which, or both of which I know the Senator would be very interested in—I ask, with the agreement of the Senator from New Jersey, that his statement appear in the RECORD as if uninterrupted, and the exchange with Senator DASCHLE, our colloquy, appear after his remarks.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I am happy to cooperate because I have a sense that the subject to be included in their remarks is one with which I have intense fascination.

I am happy to yield to the distinguished leaders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is it the majority leader's intention the Senator from New Jersey will hold the floor, following the business?

Mr. LOTT. That would be my request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mr. LOTT. I yield to Senator DASCHLE.

THE OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, although there are a lot of good things in the bill we are about to debate, there is one glaring omission—legislation to provide Amtrak with the authority to issue tax credit bonds for capital improvements. This bonding authority is critical to Amtrak's future and to the economic health of the northeast and many other areas of the country.

I have discussed this issue with members of my caucus. We had a very spirited discussion in our caucus this morning, and I know how strongly they support Amtrak and this legislation. We are very disappointed this provision was not included in this otherwise praiseworthy legislation. Amtrak supporters will not give up on passing it. In order to help them secure enactment of this important measure next year, the majority leader and I have discussed and agreed on how best to proceed. I yield the floor to allow the majority leader to describe what that understanding is at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I thank the Democratic leader for his fine work on this issue. I know there is a lot of passion, a lot of support for Amtrak. But let me remind my colleagues, I am one of those supporters. I have been an active supporter of the national rail passenger system and was very much involved a couple of years ago when we passed the Amtrak legislation. I had some strong opposition on our side of the aisle. I think we need it.

Now, I must confess one of the reasons I think we need it is I want us to have good service, not just in the northeast but I also would like to have access from my own State of Mississippi to be able to get to Atlanta and Washington and Boston, and we are the beneficiaries of Amtrak service. I think we have to do it. I have pledged if it can't run efficiently, if it cannot run without going into debt, at some point we may want to say we just can't do that and decide what is going to be the successor program.